

64<sup>TH</sup> CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

## WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE STUDENT SUCCESS

### College and Intellectual Disabilities: YES! Strategies and Tips for Applying to College

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Western Carolina University

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA  
State Board of Education | Department of Public Instruction

NOVEMBER 3-5, 2014

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Postsecondary education is a most important key to shaping a new reality for people with disabilities. It has the exciting potential to create a future based *not* on low expectations, the can't's and shouldn't's, but on the high expectations of productivity and personal and economic freedom.

*Modeleine Will*

<http://www.thinkcollege.net/training/rethinking-college-the-film>

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## Barriers Reported on Understanding Postsecondary Education Options for Individuals with IDD



UNIVERSITY  
PARTICIPANT  
PROGRAM

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

*Postsecondary education program for students  
with intellectual disability*




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### Barriers with Transition Planning

- Insufficient or ineffective transition planning and implementation
- Gaps in student preparedness
- Inadequate supports and missed opportunities to participate
- Systematic low expectations held for students with ID
- Lack of awareness among transition personnel of available PSE options
- Exclusionary social perceptions and conventions

(Griffin, McMillan, & Hodapp, 2010; Grigal, Hart, & Migliore, 2011; Stodden & Whelley, 2004...)

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### Barriers Reported from Families

- Lack of general information or guidance of options
- School and other staff expectations and attitudes about PSE options
- Financial constraints
- Staff from different places giving different advice
- Inadequate transition planning
- Different services did not work well together
- Long waiting lists for services
- Written and online materials difficult to understand

(Griffin, McMillan, & Hodapp, 2010)

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**SO WHAT'S THE GOOD NEWS?**

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**think  
COLLEGE!**

227 Programs in US

[www.thinkcollege.net](http://www.thinkcollege.net)

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**UNC**  
CAROLINA INSTITUTE FOR  
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Services | Education | Research | For Families | About Us | Support

**North Carolina Postsecondary Education Alliance**

- Mission to expand the options for postsecondary education for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities throughout North Carolina
- <http://www.cidd.unc.edu/psea/>


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**UP** UNIVERSITY PARTICIPANT PROGRAM

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

*Postsecondary education program for students with intellectual disability*

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## What is the UP Program?

- The University Participant (UP) Program is a two year, inclusive transition program for college-aged individuals with intellectual disability
- Supports up to 8 selected participants per year; 4 in each graduating cohort during the spring semester
- Funded as a model demonstration site in 2010 by U.S. Department of Education. Serves as a model program for the state by providing support to satellite programs in NC and technical assistance to programs across the nation

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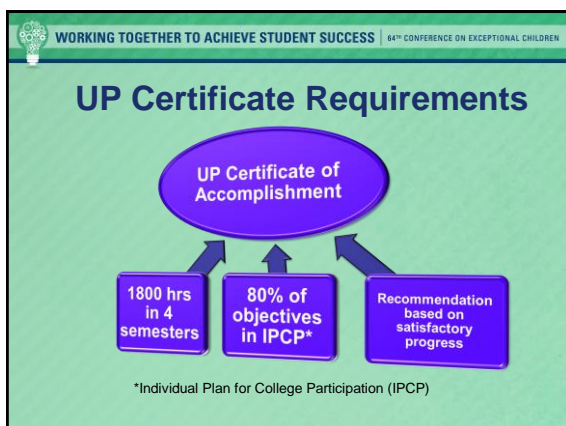
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## What do UP Students do at WCU?

- Live in campus residence halls and experience college life with same age peers
- Have an individual plan that would allow personal development for post-UP success
- Attend and audit a limited number of classes
- Participate in social events and activities




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## UP ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

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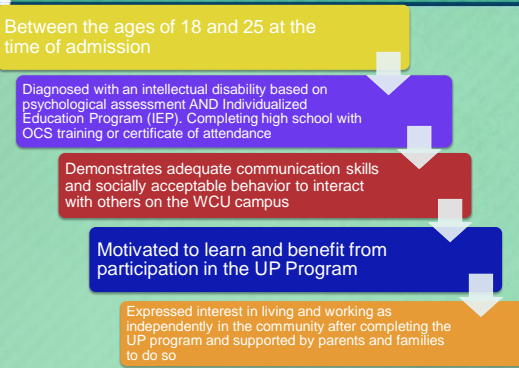
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graph TD
    A[Between the ages of 18 and 25 at the time of admission] --> B[Diagnosed with an intellectual disability based on psychological assessment AND Individualized Education Program (IEP). Completing high school with OCS training or certificate of attendance]
    B --> C[Demonstrates adequate communication skills and socially acceptable behavior to interact with others on the WCU campus]
    C --> D[Motivated to learn and benefit from participation in the UP Program]
    D --> E[Expressed interest in living and working as independently in the community after completing the UP program and supported by parents and families to do so]
  
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### College Application Materials

- A résumé
- Three letters of recommendation
- Most current psychological assessment/IEP
- Signed copy of UP statement of agreement
- Applicant video (less than 5 min)
- Family Personal Support Inventory
- Undergraduate application (\$55 fee)
- *Optional items:* completed portfolios, other honors, and/or other commendations

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### Helpful Items: Schools & Families

- Recent psychological assessments
- Specific goals related to PSE and employment
- More applicants completing applications and videos with expression and less "programming"
- Increased self-advocacy/awareness
- Employer evaluations for job shadowing or previous internship hours completed
- Specific feedback on family involvement and overall student support needs for college success
- Career assessments or interest inventories

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### UP Admissions Steering Committee

- UP Program Director/Consultant/Coordinator
- Director of Undergraduate Admissions
- Representative from Educational Outreach
- Director of Residential Living
- Director of Disability Services
- Dean of the College of Education and Allied Professions
- A member of the Counseling Department
- UP Graduate and UP Family Member
- WCU Director of Financial Aid

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### Important Dates to Remember

- **11/22/14:** Open House with WCU & UP staff
- **12/1/14:** Deadline to apply for Fall 2015
- **February:** UP Admissions Steering Committee review and selection of applicants
- **Summer:** UP Camp Orientation
- **Late August:** Move in for new UP cohort




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### Contact Information

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